

# **CITY OF ROCKVILLE**



## **GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR CITIZEN BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

Revised 3-07-2012

## **PURPOSE AND ORIGIN**

### **Boards and Commissions**

Individuals serving on Rockville's Boards and Commissions provide an invaluable service to the City. Their advice and expertise on a wide range of topics assist the Mayor and Council in the decision-making process.

Boards and Commissions originate from different sources including federal and state law as well as the City Charter and City Code. The following guidelines have been adopted to assist these groups in effectively carrying out their respective missions.

## **STRUCTURE**

Lengths of terms may vary for certain bodies, however, in most cases appointments are for three years. The practice is that terms be staggered to provide for overlap.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

In most cases, only Rockville residents are eligible for appointment to City Boards and Commissions. Some groups provide for non-residents to participate if a specific expertise is required.

Persons employed by or under contract to the City are not eligible for membership unless so provided in the enabling legislation.

Members are free to resign at any time.

The Mayor and Council generally do not appoint individuals to more than one board or commission at a given time (with the exception of ad hoc committees, special appointments, sub-committees, or task forces) The Mayor and Council may make exceptions to this practice.

## APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES

Board and Commission vacancies are advertised in Rockville Reports and on the City's website and at Mayor and Council meetings. Rockville residents are encouraged to submit an application to the Mayor and Council c/o the City Clerk. An "Expression of Interest Form" is available on the City's website, rockvillemd.gov and from the City Clerk's office. Use of the City's website form will facilitate the application process. A resume, although not necessary, is also appreciated.

When applications are received by the City Clerk, the following process occurs:

- Each applicant is sent a letter acknowledging receipt of his/her application.
- The Mayor and Council, the staff liaison and the chairperson of each Board or Commission receive a copy of the applicant's letter and resume for review and comment.
- Chairpersons or staff liaisons invite an applicant to attend a group meeting. Applicants are encouraged to attend a meeting of the particular Board or Commission to familiarize themselves with the activities of the group.
- The Mayor may take into consideration any comments of the Chairperson, staff liaison or members of the Council. The Mayor will make the final decision on the appropriateness of a nomination to the Council.
- The City Clerk will notify the Council regarding the Mayor's intention to make an appointment to the Board of Appeals, Historic District Commission and Planning Commission three weeks prior to a nomination. During the three-week period the Councilmembers who wish to contact the nominee prior to appointment have an opportunity to do so. All other appointments do not require the advance notice.
- The applicant is advised a week prior to his or her nomination being brought to the Mayor and Council for appointment approval.
- After an appointment has been confirmed by the Mayor and Council, the chairperson and staff liaison are advised; and the appointee receives a copy of the Guidelines and Procedures for Citizen Boards and Commissions and the New Member Training and Orientation Handbook. The chairperson and/or staff liaison will alert the newly appointed member to the next meeting date of the body and brief the appointee as needed.
- Applicants who are not appointed will be notified by the staff liaison and advised that their applications will remain on file (for at least one year) for consideration when future vacancies occur.

## COMPENSATION

Board and Commission members receive no compensation, although they may be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred in the performance of their duties in accordance with appropriations for the Board or Commission made by the Council.

## ATTENDANCE

All board and commission members are expected to attend the meetings of their respective Board or Commission. Excessive absences as set forth in Section 2-220 of the City Code may result in removal of a member from a Board or Commission. Occasionally, special meetings or training sessions are held for members. Attendance is generally not mandatory for these sessions, but is encouraged.

## TERM EXPIRATION

- Prior to the expiration of a member's term, the staff liaison assigned to the Board or Commission should ask the member if he/she wishes to seek reappointment. Written notification of a request for reappointment through the submission of a "Reappointment Expression of Interest Form" should be sent to the City Clerk's office prior to the expiration of the member's term. An updated resume is also appreciated. The member may or may not be reappointed by the Mayor. If reappointed, such reappointment is subject to confirmation by the Council.
- Persons seeking reappointment to a City Board or Commission will be placed into the same pool as persons seeking appointment for the first time.
- The position will be advertised in Rockville Reports, on the City's website and Mayor and Council meetings. If the individual desires reappointment, he/she will be considered along with the other applicants.

## SPECIAL CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO APPLICANTS AND MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF APPEALS, HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION AND THE PLANNING COMMISSION

In accordance with Chapter 16, "Public Ethics" of the City Code each applicant to the Board of Appeals, Historic District Commission and the Planning Commission is required to file a financial disclosure statement (on a form available from the City Clerk) prior to appointment. In addition, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 16, each member of the Board of Appeals, Historic District Commission and the Planning Commission shall submit an annual financial disclosure statement to the City Clerk on or before April 15 of each year during the individual's term in office for the immediate preceding calendar year.

## **OPERATING GUIDELINES**

**Unless the enabling legislation specifies otherwise, a body elects its chair annually from among its appointed members in accordance with Section 2-219 of the City Code. The term of the chairperson is one year.**

**The chairperson is responsible for setting the meeting agenda. A City staff liaison is assigned to each Board and Commission and will assist the chairperson in the preparation and distribution of the agenda and meeting materials. Boards and Commissions may adopt reasonable rules and regulations for the conduct of their business. Such rules and regulations shall become effective upon adoption by the Board or Commission. Some of the Boards and Commissions have adopted their own rules of procedure.**

**All Board and Commission meetings are open to the public pursuant to the Open Meetings Law. A Board or Commission may convene in executive (closed) session only for those reasons set forth in Section 10-508 of the State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Any request for an executive session should be reviewed by the City Attorney's Office.**

**Boards and Commissions shall hold meetings when necessary to conduct business or at such intervals as may be mandated by law, resolution or rule. Meetings shall be held at the call of the chairperson. The staff liaison is responsible for ensuring that all meeting dates are adequately publicized on the City's website.**

**A majority of the members of the board or commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and a majority vote of those present at any meeting, but not less than the number necessary for a quorum, shall be sufficient for any official action taken by the Board or Commission.**

**Minutes are kept of all meetings, and the staff liaison is responsible for posting and forwarding copies of the approved minutes to the City Clerk for distribution to the Mayor and Council. The staff liaison is also responsible for providing the City Clerk with copies of all meeting agendas and minutes. Agendas and minutes should also be posted on the City's website in a timely manner.**

**With the exception of meetings where transcripts are required, the minutes should be brief and reflect decisions and recommendations of a Board or Commission.**

**Chapter 16, “Public Ethics” of the Rockville City Code requires that members of the Boards and Commissions disqualify themselves from participating in any decision by which they, their immediate family, their business associates or a business entity in which they have an interest would be directly and economically impacted. In addition, such individuals are required to file a written statement with the City Clerk disclosing any interest or employment, the holding of which would require disqualification from participation, sufficiently in advance of any anticipated action to allow adequate disclosure to the public.**

**With the exception of the Board of Appeals, Historic District Commission and Planning Commission whose members are required to file annual financial disclosure statements, Board and Commission members must disclose in a statement filed with the City Clerk receipt of gifts during the calendar year in excess of twenty-five dollars (\$25) in value or a series of gifts totaling one hundred dollars (\$100) or more from entities doing business with the City.**

### **STAFFING**

**A staff liaison is assigned to each Board or Commission by the City Manager or his designee. While these individuals are responsible for providing staff support to their respective Board or Commission, they are not the group’s employee. Staff liaisons are directly responsible to their department head and/or the City Manager, and their primary role is to facilitate the flow of information among the Mayor and Council, their department and the Board or Commission.**

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

**Any position the board or commission would like to take on behalf of the City on issues affecting the City in general must be approved by the Mayor and Council.**

**Board and Commission members are encouraged to contact the Mayor and Council at any time with specific concerns, issues or questions. Correspondence directed to the Mayor and Council on behalf of the Board or Commission should be routed through the chairperson, the staff liaison and the relevant department director. The City Clerk also serves as a liaison with the Mayor and Council and may be contacted at any time.**

## **MEETINGS WITH THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL**

Attachment A

**Periodically, the Mayor and Council may hold a worksession with a Board or Commission. These worksessions serve as an opportunity for open dialogue regarding matters of mutual concern and to address any issues, including those that may have a budgetary impact.**

**Agendas and minutes of the Mayor and Council meetings are on the City's website, [www.rockvillemd.gov](http://www.rockvillemd.gov). These may include action of interest to a specific Board or Commission.**

### **CONTACT:**

**City Clerk's Office 240-314-8280**